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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/826,641

04/15/2004

Scott C. Olive

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EXAMINER

WONG, JEFFREY KEITH

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3718

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PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/826,641	<b>Applicant(s)</b> OLIVE, SCOTT C.	
	<b>Examiner</b> JEFFREY K. WONG	<b>Art Unit</b> 3718	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 November 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 22-32 and 34-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-32, and 34-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)          | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Status of the Application***

1. This Office-Action acknowledges the Appeal Brief filed on 11/24/2010. The case is to be reopened for prosecution.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 22, 26, 30-32, 34-36, 42, and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al., US PUB 2004/0072607 (Thomas) in view of Cannon et al., US PUB 2004/0106446 (Cannon) and Adams et al., US 2003/0114215 (Adams).

Regarding Claims 22, 26, 34, 36

Thomas discloses an electronic controller and a memory storage device comprising software, the electronic controller and the memory storage device being arranged such that the electronic controller can process the software (para 75. The memory unit stores control software, operational instructions and data associated with the video game.

Processors are used for implementing software.) wherein the base game comprises a spinning reel game having a plurality of reels and a plurality of pay lines (Abstract) and

Art Unit: 3718

the video display is to display the plurality of reels (para 26. The slot machine 10 includes a display window 12 through which a player may observe three spinning reels.), the software configured to:

determine whether a game play button of a gaming machine has been actuated by a player (para 50. The desired window is selected by simply touching the screen in an area over the window. The touch screen can be viewed as the game play button in which a player must actuate.);

initiating a play of a first game in response to determining that the game play button has been actuated (para 27),

determining whether the play of the first game results in a first game award outcome, wherein the first game award outcome comprises a first predefined combination of symbols associated with at least one of the pay line (para 29. Alternatively or additionally, the occurrence of "start-bonus" symbols and/or combination(s) may cause the processor to award coin(s) or credit(s) in the basic game.);

in response to determining that the play of the first game resulted in the first game award outcome, informing the player that they are entitled to a play of a second game (Abstract. The bonus game is entered upon the occurrence of a special start-bonus game outcome in the basic mode.).

Thomas failed to disclose initiating a play of the second game in response to determining that said game play button has been actuated after said step of informing

Art Unit: 3718

and wherein the play of the first game comprises activating a plurality of pay lines at a cost to the player of only one wagering unit.

However, Cannon discloses of a game that incorporates the use of a master start play button (elem 80) which is preferably configured for various modes of starting play of the selected games, which games, as previously described, may be of varying classes and types. Cannon also teaches a first game of chance can provide a person a second game of chance based on the outcome of the first game of chance (para 23). This is done so because there is a continuing need for gaming machine manufacturers to produce interesting and exciting game variations and attractive enhancements. In addition, casino operators constantly strive to increase profits by maximizing available floor space. Accordingly, there exists a need in the art for new gaming machines permitting concurrent play of multiple games on a single gaming device. This is attained by using a master play button (para 18).

Adams teaches a single wagering unit can be used to activate a plurality of play lines for a slot machine (Abstract) because it would provide for more exciting way of wagering on a machine as opposed to known wagering options (para 7).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the master start button of Cannon's invention with Thomas' invention because it would permit concurrent play of multiple games on a single gaming device which would maximize available floor space. It is also obvious that the use of a single button for initiating game play, be it a first game or a second game, would be more convenient for players. This is because, much like how it

Art Unit: 3718

would maximize floor space to have one gaming machine capable of playing multiple games, it would also maximize panel space by having one button capable of playing multiple games. It is also obvious to implement a plurality of pay lines with a single wagering unit because it would provide for more exciting ways of playing a wagering game as taught by Adams

Regarding Claim 30.

Thomas discloses wherein said game play button includes visual indicia informing the player that said game play button is for (1) actuation to initiate play of a base game and (2) actuation to initiate play of a feature game (para 77. The operator interface may comprise any combination of push buttons, joysticks, keypads, touch- screens and the like. The game controller executes control software in the memory according to the player inputs and communicates the resulting video game activity including, for example, text, animations and background graphics to the graphics display.).

Regarding Claims 31, 32, 42, 43

Thomas discloses wherein the bonus game may comprise any type of game, either similar to or completely different from the basic game, which is entered upon the occurrence of a selected event or outcome of the basic game (para 4).

Regarding Claim 35.

Thomas further discloses comprising a video display to display the button, and a touch

Art Unit: 3718

sensor to sense actuation of the button (para 50).

Claims 23, 27, 37, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al., US PUB 2004/0072607 (Thomas) in view of Cannon et al., US PUB 2004/0106446 (Cannon) and Adams et al., US 2003/0114215 (Adams) as applied to the claims above, and in further view of Jones, US 6,939,223 (Jones).

Regarding Claims 23, 27.

Thomas, Cannon and Adams disclose the invention as described above. Thomas discloses further comprising the steps of: determining whether the play of the second game results in a second game award outcome, wherein the second game award outcome comprises a second predefined combination of symbols associated with at least one of the pay lines (para 4. The bonus game may comprise any type of game, either similar to or completely different from the basic game, which is entered upon the occurrence of a selected event or outcome of the basic game...The '840 application discloses an embodiment wherein the basic game is a reel-type slot machine and the bonus game is a simulated reel-type slot machine implemented on a dot-matrix display.).

Thomas, Cannon and Adams failed to disclose allowing the player to select at least one of the second predefined combination of symbols and awarding the player only one of a plurality of prizes based on the at least one of the second predefined combination of symbols selected by the player.

However, Jones discloses of a slot machine system which players are given an award based on the outcome of a combination of symbols (Col 1, lines 45-53) where players are able to select from a predefined combination of symbols and is awarded accordingly (Col 10, lines 37-48) because it increase player enjoyment and excitement and keep players entertained (Col 1, lines 45-58).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate Jones teachings of player-selectable symbols with Thomas' and Cannon's and Adams' combined invention because it would further increase player enjoyment as taught by Jones'

Regarding Claim 37.

Thomas further discloses wherein the controller determines an award outcome of the bonus feature game based upon a combination of symbols associated with at least one of the pay lines, receives a selection of at least one of the symbols, and awards one of a plurality of prizes based on the selection (para 29. Alternatively or additionally, the occurrence of "start-bonus" symbols and/or combination(s) may cause the processor to award coin(s) or credit(s) in the basic game.).

Regarding Claim 40.

Thomas further discloses wherein the base game comprises a spinning reel game having a plurality of reels and a plurality of pay lines (Abstract), the single wager option



Art Unit: 3718

activates the plurality of pay lines (para 26), and the controller determines an award outcome of the bonus feature game based upon a combination of symbols associated with at least one of the pay lines, receives a selection of at least one of the symbols, and awards one of a plurality of prizes based on the selection (para 29).

Claims 24-25, 28-30, 38 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al., US PUB 2004/0072607 (Thomas) and Cannon et al., US PUB 2004/0106446 (Cannon) and Adams et al., US 2003/0114215 (Adams), and Jones, US 6,939,223 (Jones), as applied to the claims above, and further in view of Vancura, US 2004/0219963 (Vancura).

Regarding Claims 24, 28.

Thomas, Cannon, Adams, and Jones failed to disclose comprising the step of causing the gaming machine to randomly select at least one of the second predefined combination of symbols if the player does not selected at least one of the second predefined combination of symbols with a period of time.

However, Vancura discloses of an invention related to casino games and, in particular, to improvements in the methods of playing timed bonus games on an underlying game (para 2) that can be applied to slot machines (para 5) because there exists a continual desire to limit the temporal length of the bonus game, so as to maximize the house advantage and to minimize moneymaking "down time" of the underlying casino gaming device(para 8) where if a bonus timer does expire, then there

Art Unit: 3718

exists a design and method step choice of the player as to how the gaming is to proceed. In a preferred embodiment described above, the player is simply provided with a random response, and is awarded based on the accuracy of the randomly selected response (para 32).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the timer of Vancura's teachings with Thomas' and Cannon's and Adams' and Jones' combined invention with Vancura's bonus teachings as means of maximizing the house advantage and minimizing moneymaking "down time" of the underlying casino gaming device as taught by Vancura.

Regarding Claims 25, 29.

Thomas discloses further comprising the step of altering the at least one of the second predefined combination of symbols selected by the player or randomly selected by the gaming machine to reveal information about the one of the plurality of prizes to be awarded to the player (para 51. Upon selection of a selection element, the game controller causes the outcome associated with the selected selection element to be revealed on the display).

Regarding Claims 38, 41.

Vacura discloses of an invention related to casino games and, in particular, to improvements in the methods of playing timed bonus games on an underlying game

Art Unit: 3718

(para 2) that can be applied to slot machines (para 5) because there exists a continual desire to limit the temporal length of the bonus game, so as to maximize the house advantage and to minimize moneymaking "down time" of the underlying casino gaming device(para 8) where if a bonus timer does expire, then there exists a design and method step choice of the player as to how the gaming is to proceed. In a preferred embodiment described above, the player is simply provided with a random response, and is awarded based on the accuracy of the randomly selected response(para 32).

Regarding Claim 39.

Thomas discloses comprising the step of altering the at least one of the second predefined combination of symbols selected by the player or randomly selected by the gaming machine to reveal information about the one of the plurality of prizes to be awarded to the player (para 51. Upon selection of a selection element, the game controller causes the outcome associated with the selected selection element to be revealed on the display).

### ***Response to Arguments***

3. Applicant's arguments, see pages 10-20 of Appeal Brief, filed 11/24/2010, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 22-32, and 34-43 under 35 USC § 103 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Thomas et al., US PUB 2004/0072607 (Thomas) and Cannon et al., US PUB

Art Unit: 3718

2004/0106446 (Cannon) and Adams et al., US 2003/0114215 (Adams), and Jones, US 6,939,223 (Jones) and Vancura, US 2004/0219963 (Vancura).

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JEFFREY K. WONG whose telephone number is (571)270-3003. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9:30am-8:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on (571) 272-4690. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JKW

/David L Lewis/

Application/Control Number: 10/826,641

Page 12

Art Unit: 3718

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3714